

WW
Zp
Box 3
no. 10

ATONEMENT

ITS NECESSITY, NATURE AND EXTENT,

WITH ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS.

A SERMON,

BY THE

REV. JOSHUA L. WILSON, D. D.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

SAMUEL R. WILSON,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH, CINCINNATI.

Δι' αὐτῆς αποθανὼν ἵτι λαλεῖ.

THE LIBRARY
UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Richmond, Virginia 22807

CINCINNATI:

1854.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854,
BY SAMUEL R. WILSON,
In the Clerk's Office for the District Court of Ohio.

THE LIBRARY
UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BEN FRANKLIN PRINT
Richmond, Virginia 22181

PREFACE.

In the winter of 1842-'43, some of the Pastors of the Presbyterian churches in this city, undertook a series of Monthly Sabbath Evening Discourses, upon the doctrines of the Gospel. The subject of discourse was assigned to each Minister respectively, and the discourse was read in a meeting for the purpose previous to its being delivered. The important topic of THE ATONEMENT, was given to the then senior Pastor of the First Church, Dr. Joshua L. Wilson. This led to the preparation, by him, of the following views respecting the nature, necessity and extent of the satisfaction made by Christ, to the Justice of God for sinners. These views, so concisely but clearly stated, will be found to be in strictest harmony with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Church, and sustained by the plainest Scripture proofs. Such, at least, was the estimation in which they were held at the time of their delivery.

Ten years have passed away. The author of this discourse has been called from his labors by his Lord, and has gone to test, in the light of eternity, the soundness of that faith for which he suffered reproach whilst living, and in the triumphs of which he died. And now we are told that the faith of the Church is quite another thing; that those who hold to the doctrine of a "definite atonement," are "very few in number," and "foggy" in intellect; that they are Gethseminites, and teach that "*so much suffering and obedience*" was "*paid to buy off*"

so many heads from penal justice." And from what quarter does this misrepresentation of the Bible and Confession of Faith doctrine of a Definite Atonement, and this ridicule of those who have held and taught it, come? Is it from a quarter from which Orthodox Presbyterians have become accustomed to expect such things? Not at all. It is from men who are called by our name; from men who are attempting to wield, to the injury of truth, an organ which was established mainly through the exertions and influence of those whose faith they now misrepresent and impugn. The following extracts from the *Presbyterian of the West*, edited by Rev. Dr. Willis Lord and Rev. Simeon Brown, will show in what esteem those who maintain the doctrine of a definite Atonement, against Arminian and Pelagian corruptions, are held by some who call themselves Calvinistic Presbyterians. In their paper of the 23d February, they thus express themselves:* "It is certainly time Dr. Converse and other editors of his Church, were informed that the idea of a *limited atonement* is not a mark of distinction betwixt the Old and New Schools. If there be here and there a Minister, whose Theological perceptions are so foggy, or a candidate whose instructions have been so defective that he does not see the difference† between "The redemption purchased by Christ," and "The effectual application of it

* Article entitled "The Christian Observer and the Atonement."

† The difference which is here meant, is evidently a difference between the *extent* of the Redemption purchased and its application. The one, we are left to understand, is unlimited and universal; the other limited and definite. But that no such difference is recognized in the standards of the Church, is plain from the passage quoted on p. vi. (Conf. Cap. viii, Sec 8.) and also from Cap. iii, Sec. 6, in which it is expressly affirmed that "neither are any other REDEEMED by Christ; but the elect only." "In this section we are taught, 1st: That Christ, by his death, did not merely render the salvation of all men possible, or bring them into a salvable state, but purchased and secured a certain salvation to all for whom he died. 2d, That Christ died exclusively for the elect, and purchased redemption for them alone; in other words, that Christ made atonement only for the elect, and that in no sense did he die for the rest of the race. Our Confession first asserts, positively, that the elect are redeemed by Christ; and then, negatively, that none other are redeemed by Christ, but the elect only. If this does not affirm the doctrine of particular redemption, or of a limited atonement, we know not what language could express that doctrine more explicitly. It is diametrically opposed to the system of the Arminians, who hold that "Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular." It is not less opposed to the doctrine maintained by many, that though the death of Christ had a special reference to the elect, and in connection with the Divine purpose, infallibly secured their salvation; yet that it has also a general reference, and made an equal atonement for all men."—*Shaw's Exposition*.

to us, by His Holy Spirit," it is not a sufficient reason for affirming such views to be the standard of Orthodoxy for an entire denomination. "We venture to affirm that but a minority of our ministers and ruling elders, are willing to receive and adopt his (Symington's) definition of the Atonement. The majority regard his language as unhappy, to say the least. And those who do adopt his definitions, explain them away, and come out on the ground that, in some sense Christ did become a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Those in our Church, or elsewhere, who maintain that the Atonement was made definitely, and only for the elect—so much suffering and obedience being paid to buy off so many heads from penal justice, are very few in number, and are called Gethseminites."

Whether there is any thing "foggy" in these extracts, the reader can judge for himself. It is, however, very obvious from them, that the editors of the Presbyterian of the West (!) are either ignorant of the fact, or presume upon their readers being ignorant, that one of the points of difference betwixt the Old and New Schools, is this of a definite atonement.* It is further evident that they themselves believe in indefinite atonement, or universal redemption; that Christ atoned for the sins of all men, "and not definitely and only for the elect." In other words, that Christ purchased redemption equally for Judas Iscariot as for Simon Peter; and the only difference between them, was that Peter received the benefit of the purchase, whilst Judas derived no advantage from it. He was, indeed, redeemed from Hell, but notwithstanding, he is now suffering, and will continue to

* It is not by this meant, that all who belong, ecclesiastically, to the New School body, differ from us on this subject. It is believed that there are some amongst that body, who hold the doctrine of the Atonement according to the plain and obvious import of the language of the Confession of Faith. But the major part of the N. S. are understood to entertain views respecting the Atonement, impossible to be reconciled with the Westminster standards, and to stand upon the same platform with some in the Presbyterian Church, who, by the ancient and facile art of "explaining away," are able—as they think—to extract Arminian Doctrine from a purely Calvinistic Creed.

suffer there, through all eternity! Strange redemption, which redeems a man from nothing! Strange purchase which procures nothing! This is not the sort of atonement the Westminster Assembly of Divines were thinking of when they said: "To *all* those *for whom* Christ hath PURCHASED REDEMPTION, he doth *certainly* and *effectually* APPLY and communicate the same." But it is quite as easy to "explain away" the Confession of Faith, as the definitions of Symington; and quite as easy *now* as it was twenty years ago. And, it may be added, it will be found quite as difficult to convince well instructed Presbyterians that this explaining away is any less a subversion of the doctrines of the Confession now, than it was esteemed then. The history of the reception of one of these editors into the Cincinnati Presbytery, ought, at least, to satisfy him that there are some still in the Church, who are not willing her doctrines should be explained away, without raising their voices against a course so injurious. It is true the finger of scorn may be pointed now, as ever, at those who insist that men ought not to subvert a creed they have solemnly adopted, and that those who attempt such a thing, should not be permitted to remain in the Church, if they will not desist. The cry may be raised, "You are very few in number," or, as the phrase was in '33, with the then exultant majority of the Cincinnati Presbytery—"a *lean minority*." But is there any real foundation for such a contemptuous assertion. Where is the evidence that those who believe in a definite atonement are few in number, or that the believers and teachers of universal redemption are a majority of the Presbyterian Church? And suppose (if such a supposition is admissible) they were a majority, what then? Is it necessary to remind these editors that numbers do not determine truth? Is it necessary to tell them what

has become of majorities in past times, whose boastful taunts they are now imitating? "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

It is time, however, for the Pastors and Elders of the Presbyterian Church in this region, to look at this matter, if they are not prepared to abandon the principles which called forth in 1833, the "Act and Testimony." Will the Cincinnati Presbytery consent that doctrines which were condemned in former days shall now be propagated with their sanction? Will they allow their churches to be taught the doctrine of Universal Redemption; that Christ atoned equally for Iscariot and Simon Magus, as for John and Paul? Will the Churches throughout the Synod continue to sustain a paper which is arraying itself against the doctrine that the Atonement of Christ was strictly vicarious, made only for the sins of those for whom Christ undertook as Mediator of the Covenant of grace, and whom He represented as the second Adam? A little time will answer these questions. The writer of this preface has great confidence that it is only requisite to call the attention of his brethren to this budding error, to insure the arrest of its growth in the Church. He does not apprehend that those who are trying to give it vigor, will be able to hide themselves under the shadow of the great name of Dr. Chalmers. For to deprive them of this refuge it is only necessary to know that this great man has never been taken as the exponent of Presbyterian Orthodoxy in this country or Scotland: so far from it, his Lectures on the Romans show clearly that he did not believe the doctrine of the Imputation of Adam's sin, in any such sense as is held by the Presbyterian Church. It is quite possible, therefore, that he may have expressed himself as unsatisfactorily upon the doctrine of the Atonement. The mind, that however

capacious, could not find Imputed sin in Romans v., might not find definite Atonement in John x.

The author of the Discourse now given to the public labored under no such dimness of perception; expressed himself in no such doubtful manner either on Imputation or Atonement. His sermon on the former subject will be remembered by many who will read this with interest and readily recognise the same logical clearness and Scriptural accuracy in both. If the publication of the latter should be made as useful as was the former; if it should have the effect of recalling to the support of the truth some who seem to have almost forgotten how they were once taught in the word; if its perusal should serve to confirm any "in the faith once delivered to the saints" or to encourage even a single candidate for the ministry not to be ashamed to defend that faith, it will prove to be not less a word in season now than it was when first preached by him "who though dead yet speaketh."

S. R. W.

ELM STREET, CINCINNATI, Feb. 29, 1854.

ATONEMENT.

"AND NOT ONLY SO, BUT WE ALSO JOY IN GOD, THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED THE ATONEMENT."—*Rom. v. 11.*

The religion taught in the Bible, imparts joy to every true believer. Before a sinner receives the Atonement, sorrow and fear torment his heart; but when the Atonement is received, his soul is filled with joy in God, "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is as true in religion as in philosophy, that every effect has a cause.

To understand the cause of this joy, we must first know the condition of a sinner; and then what it is that he receives that makes his heart rejoice in God. The condition of every sinner is that of a condemned criminal, on whom the sentence of the law has not been executed. The sentence of death has been passed upon him, but the time of his execution depends upon the unrevealed will of his Sovereign. While the criminal is in this state, both of respite and suspense, a friend steps into his law-place—offers himself a victim—is accepted by the Chief Ruler, and dies to procure his pardon; and all this is done without the device or knowledge of the malefactor. A messenger is now sent to offer to him this purchased pardon—to restore him to favor—to show him by whom and in what way his offence has been cancelled and pardon procured; and to assure him that nothing is now wanting to make the satisfaction of his friend available for his safety, honor and felicity, but a cordial reception, on his part, of what

had been done for his deliverance. But the condemned criminal dislikes the Government. He considers the offer degrading, as he cannot be pardoned and received into favor on his own merit; and he hopes the executioner will not come till he can find some other way of escape: and the offer is, for the present, declined. But the messenger of mercy, instead of leaving him, kindly proceeds to reason and expostulate. The laws of the Government are shown to be good—the character of the Chief Magistrate is proved to be such as to deserve both love and obedience. The crimes of the condemned culprit are set before him, so as to demonstrate that the dignity of his Sovereign, the honor of justice, the good of society, all demand, that if he be pardoned, it must be by a mediator suffering the penalty of the law in his place; and, finally, he is convinced that all hope of escape in any other way is vain. In addition to all this, the love of his friend is pressed upon his attention—“greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” He now discovers his imminent danger; the turpitude of his crimes, the justness of his condemnation, the long-suffering of his Sovereign, the unspeakable love of his friend, all deeply affect him. His heart relents, and he cordially accepts the offered pardon. His chains are knocked off—his raiment is changed—his prison doors are opened, and he is introduced to all the privileges of the Royal Family. His joy is great; yea, unspeakable!

Now, that which his friend suffered, in order to remove his offence and bring him into favor, was the Atonement, which he received when he cordially consented to the terms of pardon. No illustration can be made from the affairs of men, fully to explain the subject before us. Just Governments among men, in cases of capital offence, will not punish the innocent for the

guilty; because, when a valuable citizen is cut off, he is lost to society, while no assurance can be given that the redeemed criminal will become a good member of community. Not so in the Divine Government.

The Lord Jesus Christ, by whom sinners of Adam's race receive the Atonement, had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. If he was delivered for our offences, he was also raised for our justification. And there is an ample assurance given that all who are pardoned, shall become good citizens in the Kingdom of God.

In a more full discussion of this subject, I shall attempt to shew—

I. WHAT THE ATONEMENT IS.

II. SPEAK OF ITS NECESSITY.

III. TREAT OF ITS EXTENT.

IV. ANSWER OBJECTIONS.

I. What is the Atonement, which brings joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to the heart of every Christian?

The Atonement is that which removes the offence of sin, and reconciles the sinner to God. It is that, on account of which pardon is bestowed, and transgressions are judicially cancelled.

The common acceptation of the term atonement, sustains this answer. It signifies adequate reparation for an insult or injury so made as to restore to friendship parties at variance.

The Greek word, which is here translated atonement, is, in other places, rendered reconciliation. In 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, the word occurs twice: "Hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation—hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Some have thought that this text ought to be so translated as to read: "By whom we have now received the reconciliation." But this

would obscure the text, by putting the effect for the cause. The translators, by the use of the word atonement, have made the meaning clear, by expressing the cause of reconciliation with God; namely, the satisfaction made by Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, the word atonement frequently occurs. The primary import of the word from which the Hebrew term is derived, is to cover. The word translated atonement, is applied to various objects. To the pitch that covered the Ark of Noah, to prevent the entrance of the water—thus it was a cover; Gen. vi. 14—to the hoar-frost on the ground—as a cover; Exod., xvi. 14. And to the mercy-seat or lid of the Ark of the Covenant; *i. e.*, the cover of the Ark; Exod. xxv. 17. It is not, however, in any of these cases, translated atonement, but retains its primary meaning—a cover. As a name given to the mercy-seat of the Ark of the Covenant, it is translated into Greek *ἱλαστήριον*, and then into English, propitiation. On this mercy-seat appeared the symbol of the Divine Presence. There God communed with His people, as a reconciled God. In Rom. iii. 25, Paul explains this, by informing us that Jesus Christ is the propitiation, through faith in his blood. The lid of the Ark of the Covenant was no mercy-seat, until it was sprinkled with piacular blood. (Heb. ix. 7.) And Jesus Christ is no propitiation, but by the sprinkling of his own blood, which he shed for the remission of sins, (Heb. ix. 12, and x. 19, 20.) The mercy-seat, or propitiation, is not the Atonement, but it is the place of reconciliation and communion with God, by means of the Atonement. Where the Hebrew word is translated atonement, it bears, in a moral sense, its primary meaning—a cover. (Num. xxix. 11, Lev. i. 4, and v. 6.) It signifies a covering of the offence of sin, for the purpose of establishing reconciliation. The verb from

which the noun is derived, is translated to make atonement (Exod. xxx. 15); to make reconciliation (Levit. viii. 15); to appease (Gen. xxxii); to be merciful (Deut. xxi. 8); and to forgive (Jer. xviii. 28); and the noun is translated *ransom* (Exod. xxx. 12); *satisfaction* (Num. xxxv. 31); and *atonement* (Exod. xxix. 36.) The primary idea is to cover sin; *i. e.*, to put the offence out of sight. "Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness, without works—saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are *covered*." Rom. iv. 7.

I am now prepared to say, that in order to take away sin, so as to reconcile the sinner to God, an expiatory sacrifice must be offered and accepted; *i. e.*, an innocent victim must die, by the shedding of its blood, in the room of the guilty person. It was blood that had power to make atonement for the soul. God decided, that without shedding of blood, there is no remission. (Heb., ix. 22.) A reason was assigned for this, when men were commanded not to eat blood. "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it unto you upon the Altar, to make an Atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an Atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11.) It is the life that is forfeited by sin. The life is in the blood. The sinner, then, must die, or the blood of some appointed victim, must be shed to save his life. But it was not possible for the blood of typical victims to take away sin. Jesus Christ, therefore, by his own blood, hath procured reconciliation to God, for guilty men. We are not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The Atonement, then, by which we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is his own blood, which

he poured out when he gave his life a ransom for many. He made peace by the blood of his cross—to reconcile things in heaven and things on the earth; and in the memorials of his death, we have the cup of the New Testament in his blood—shed for many—for the remission of sins.

Here I must inquire, what the Saviour really did when he made the Atonement.

1st. "He bear our sins in his own body, on the tree." (1 Pet. ii. 24.) But sins are transgressions of the law of God. They are the evil dispositions or actions of accountable creatures. How could Jesus Christ bear them? He did not so bear our sins as to make them belong either to his disposition or actions. He did not bear them so as to tinge his own soul with pollution. There is one way, and one only, in which he could bear our sins in his own body—that is, by imputation; and this he did, when "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." "He was wounded for our transgressions—he was bruised for our iniquities—the chastisement of our peace *was upon* him; and with his stripes we are healed."

2d. When Jesus Christ made the Atonement, he suffered punishment in our stead. (1 Pet. iii. 18.) "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins—the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." As a legal substitute, he suffered the penalty of the law, which man had transgressed. Death was that penalty. The wages of sin is death. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. Jesus Christ suffered death, even the death of the cross. Not only temporal death, which is a separation of the soul from the body, but spiritual death, which is a separation of the soul from God. In this consisted his greatest suffering. When his soul was made an offering for sin, his cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His conscience felt

no remorse; his body saw no corruption; his soul continued not in eternal pain, because these made no part of the penalty of law. These are results when the sinner suffers the penalty of the law in his own person. When the sinner dies, he feels remorse, because he is personally guilty—his body sees corruption, because the soul is gone—and he suffers the pains of hell forever, because, like the devil and his angels, he becomes the eternal enemy of God. Not so with Jesus Christ, our substitute. When he died “It was finished.” Death was the penalty of the broken law; and that being suffered, the just for the unjust, the law had no further demands. Justice was satisfied; and the Father gave him a receipt in full—in the resurrection—when his soul was not left in hell; neither did his flesh see corruption.

Some tell us that Christ Jesus suffered as a witness. This is true. But as a witness, he testified that “The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many.”

Others inform us, that he suffered as an example. This is also true. But the example is only good when connected with the fact that he suffered for sins. If the Father bruised him and put him to grief, for no sin, then the example is terrifying and shocking. But this could not be. He was made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law.

3d. When Jesus Christ made the Atonement, he offered himself a sacrifice to God for us. Sacrifices were offered to God by sinful men, from the earliest ages after the fall, as is clearly proven by the offerings of Cain and Abel. But moral sacrifices, such as prayer, praise, penitence and the fruits of the earth, could never take away sin. The great concern in man’s salvation, was the putting away of sin, so that the sinner could be restored to Divine favor. This object

could only be accomplished by the great atoneing sacrifice, which all the expiatory sacrifices under the law represented. The victim in this case was the Lamb of God—His own Son—as the Apostle says, “Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor.” (Eph. v. 2.) Again, “After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he forever sat down on the right hand of God.” “For by one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” (Heb. x. 12, 14.) This is sufficient. Here is proof positive, that the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ, when he offered himself without spot to God, is available to take away sins. “Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus let us draw near with a true heart and in full assurance of faith.” Every sinner who receives the Atonement, shall have joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, having shewn what the Atonement is, I proceed—

II. To speak of its necessity. Why was an Atonement needed? Necessity is the state of a thing that must be as it is, owing to its relation to something that is prior or superior to itself. Luke says (xxiii. 17), “Of necessity Pilate must release unto the Jews one prisoner at the feast.” The necessity in this case arose from long established custom, which there appeared no good reason to alter. Paul says (Heb., ix. 16, 17), “Where a testament is, there must also, of necessity, be the death of the testator.” The reason was that, by law, a testament is of no force till after men are dead. In the Holy Land there was a necessity for cities of refuge, because God distinguished between the murderer and the manslayer, and provided for the latter a place of security from the avenger of blood. Necessity was laid upon Paul to preach the Gospel. This necessity arose from the rev-

elation of Jesus Christ made to him. Now, as there can be nothing prior, nothing superior to God, it follows that necessity of all kinds is the result of His will. All necessity springs from the eternal purpose of God, which comprehends all His decrees. "The decrees of God are His eternal purpose." Hence I am prepared to say, that the necessity of Atonement was solely produced by God's purpose to save sinners. If Jehovah had never purposed, according to the good pleasure of His will, to save souls from death, and to bring, from amongst men, many sons unto glory, there never could have been any necessity for an Atonement. No Atonement is needed for fallen angels, for whom God has revealed no purpose of mercy. Christ took not on him the nature of angels. And if there be any of Adam's race whom God never purposed to save, there is no need of any Atonement for them; and further, if God had determined to leave all mankind to perish in their sins, as He might justly have done, then no necessity for an Atonement could possibly have existed. The necessity of punishment resulted from the introduction of sin; and the necessity of Atonement arises from God's purpose to save sinners by a Mediator. Other ends may be answered, in the Divine Government, besides the salvation of sinners, by the Atonement, but they must be incidental. They did not render the sufferings of the Son of God necessary. God might have been glorified and the honor of the law sustained, without the death of Christ; but sinners could not have been saved. His sufferings were necessary for the salvation of sinners, because God had determined to save, and to save in no other way. But in the Scriptures it is made manifest that sinners are saved according to the election of grace. If then, by the election of grace, the necessity of Atonement has been produced, the

Holy Law and the inflexible justice of God required that the Atonement should be complete. So complete as to make peace between things in heaven and things on the earth (Col., i. 20). So complete that mercy and truth might meet together—righteousness and peace might embrace each other (Ps., 85: 10). God is not unrighteous when he taketh vengeance; and none with impunity can call Him a rigid exactor, when He claims the payment of the uttermost farthing (Mat., v. 26). His benevolence, therefore, is not tarnished, when, without abatement, He exacts from the surety the full penalty of the law which the sinner was condemned to suffer. Christ Jesus, in making complete Atonement, fulfilled all righteousness, or he did not meet the necessity of the case. He must have met and satisfied every claim of justice—every jot and title of the law, by his obedience, unto the death of the cross, must have been fulfilled. The benevolence of God is not displayed at the expense of truth and justice; but it is displayed in the gift of His Son to die, the just for the unjust. “He that *spared* not His own Son, but gave him up for us all, how, shall He not, with him, freely give us all things?” “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 Jno., iv 14). Those who extol the benevolence of God, by denying that Christ suffered the penalty of the Divine Law, and affirm that the sufferings of Christ were a substitute for penalty, destroy the idea of a complete Atonement, and exhibit God as sparing His Son, by taking a less satisfaction than the law demanded. If God could take less from the surety, why not take less from the sinner, and thus make a greater display of His benevolence, by exacting less from sinners and sparing His own Son altogether? One says God accepts of repentance—another that He

accepts of the sufferings of the present life—a third has recourse to purgatory—while a fourth sets all these aside, and offers us the sufferings of Christ as a substitute for penalty. All these are based upon the same foundation—a false idea of the benevolence of God. Law, and justice and truth are all to be eclipsed by the splendor of benevolence. Men may tell us that the Atonement, taken as a substitute for the penalty of the law, is the only appointed safeguard of the general good, in the pardon of penitent believers—that it repairs and strengthens the broken law—and that it opens a new channel for a lateral stream of the goodness of God to roll down upon our deeply fallen and guilty world—a stream sufficient for the salvation of all men. But is there in all this specious rhetoric, one doctrine of the Gospel correctly stated? Are the claims of justice met by a substitute for penalty? Are the sinners' obligations to the law as a covenant of works cancelled? How can God be just when He justifies the ungodly? Is the law magnified and made honorable when its penalty is set aside? Is everlasting righteousness brought in when all righteousness is not fulfilled? Alas! such an Atonement, instead of being sufficient for all men, is sufficient for the salvation of no one—not even the penitent believer—for his penitence cannot save him, and his faith rests upon an inadequate Atonement.

Having now proved that the necessity of the Atonement is produced by the election of grace, and shewn the necessity also of its being complete, I proceed—

III. To speak of its extent. For whom did Jesus Christ make satisfaction to Divine justice to reconcile them to God? If our view of what the Atonement is be correct, there is but one of two answers that can possibly be given to this question. Either the Atonement was made by Jesus Christ for all mankind,

without exception, or it was made for all men who were chosen in him to everlasting life. The latter answer is true. The Atonement is of the same extent with the Election of grace. The Atonement removes the offence of sin, and reconciles sinners to God. Anything that does not procure reconciliation between parties at variance, is no Atonement. Reconciliation with God and eternal salvation are inseparably connected; and both are of equal extent with the Atonement. This is established by the unity of the Divine Counsels. There can be no dissension among the persons of the Godhead. The love and grace of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, have precisely the same objects. These objects, in relation to Jesus Christ, are called elect, a chosen people—his seed—his sheep, and are said to be given to him by the Father before the world began. Now, if the Atonement be made for a less number than is included in the election of grace, then some shall perish for want of an Atonement, whom God had chosen to everlasting life. And if the Atonement was made for a greater number than God had chosen to salvation, then some shall perish for whom satisfaction to justice was made, and justice will punish them without right. But no such absurdities can occur in the plan of salvation.

Can it be believed that Jesus Christ made an Atonement for those for whom he makes no intercession? "I pray not for the world," said he, "but for them that thou hast given me out of the world—his faithful Apostles—and for them also who shall believe in me through their word." Can we believe that he made Atonement for those whom he has no power to save? Hear his own words, addressed to his Father: "Thou hast given him power over all flesh—that he should give eternal life (not to all flesh, but) to as many as

thou hast given him." God's foreknowledge of His people, their predestination to holiness, their calling, their justification and glorification, are so many links in the unbroken chain of salvation, beginning in a past eternity—running through all time, and terminating in a future eternity of glory. There is no reason for contemplating the Atonement of greater or less extent than the election of grace. It can never be that God will condemn a soul for whom Jesus Christ has made an Atonement. For, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that Justifieth—who is he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died; yea, rather that has risen again."

To these views of the nature, necessity and extent of the Atonement, some have raised objections. To these I am—

IV. To attempt a reply. I cannot attempt to answer all objections. But if I prove successful in answering the greater, the less may be considered refuted.

The greatest objection is drawn from passages of Scripture, which seem to teach a different doctrine. One of these is found in 1 John ii. 1, 2: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Those who rely on this text to prove an unlimited Atonement, explain the whole world to mean all mankind—all the race of Adam, without exception. The Arminian urges this text to prove that all men are, by the Atonement, placed in a new state of probation, and may be saved if they will. The Universalist more consistently urges that, as the Atonement is made for the sins of the whole world, all men shall be saved. Both schemes are founded upon the very doubtful phrase,

"the whole world." Every Christian scholar knows that the word "world" and the phrases "all the world" — "the whole world," are often used by the inspired writers in a limited sense.

Luke says (ii. 1) "There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that *all the world* should be taxed;" i. e., at farthest, all the Roman Empire. But there were millions of men living beyond the reach of this decree. Again, in Acts xi. 28, 29, it is said that the Prophet Agabus "signified by the Spirit, that there should be great dearth throughout *all the world*, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar." The Disciples at Antioch understood this of the Holy Land; and history informs us that this dearth, which produced a famine in Judea, did not extend to Egypt nor Asia Minor. John says, v. 19: "The whole world lieth in wickedness," when at the same time there were tens of thousands of Christians living, over whom sin had no dominion, for they were not in wickedness but under grace. Our Lord says, John xv. 19: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In Rev. xiii. 3: it is said: "*All the world* wondered after the Beast." The whole world surveyed the Beast with astonishment, and went after him. Did all the race of Adam, all mankind, do this? In John xii. 19: "Behold, the world has gone after him," i. e., after Christ. Did all Adam's race do this? But some, who perceive the absurdity of founding an important doctrine on a doubtful phrase, suppose that John speaks of "*the whole world*" in opposition to the contracted prejudices of the Jews, and that *the world* means the Gentiles, i. e., men of all nations, co-extensive with the promise made to Abraham—"In thee shall all families of the earth

be blessed." And this would accord with the song of the redeemed—"Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people." Rev. v. 9. This view of "the whole world" falls in, also, with my view of the extent of the atonement. And here I might rest the matter. But there is another application of the phrase here used by John—"a propitiation for the sins of the whole world"—which appears more consistent with the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. The question is "*for the sins*" of what "*whole world*" is Jesus Christ a propitiation, or atonement? Was it for "the whole world" that Cæsar Augustus taxed? Or was it for "the whole world" that lieth in wickedness? Or "the whole world" that wondered after the beast? Or was it "the whole world" on whom the dearth, predicted by Agabus, came? Or is there some other world, mentioned in the Scriptures, for the sins of which Christ Jesus is indeed a propitiation? The apostle Paul, 2 Cor. v. 19, describes to us another world in these remarkable words: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Here, then, is one world distinguished from all other worlds, by reconciliation to God in Christ, and the non-imputation of their trespasses unto them. We may say, then, with confidence, that Jesus Christ, the righteous, is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, whom God is reconciling to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

2. There is another text which is supposed by many to militate against our views of the atonement. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but

unto him which died for them and rose again." This is considered a strong text in favor of unlimited atonement. Dr. Bloomfield says: "Christ died an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of all," and then adds, "It is scarcely necessary to observe how strongly this inculcates the doctrine of universal redemption, which says Dr. A. Clark, no apostolic man ever did doubt or could doubt." Here Dr. Bloomfield has taken a false assumption, made an unfounded assertion, and uttered an unchristian denunciation. He assumes that the word *all* means *all mankind*—whereas, it is well known, that the word *all* is frequently used in a very limited sense, and its latitude of signification must be determined by the context. Let us look at a few examples. Matt. iii. 5, "Then went out unto him Jerusalem and *all* Judea and *all* the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." After using these general expressions, to describe the great popularity of John's ministry, after saying *all* were baptized, in the next verse, the sacred historian tells us of the rejection of the Pharisees and Saducees as a generation of vipers. We are, therefore, constrained to take the word *all* in a limited sense, as meaning many, or a great number, or we must say the historian has contradicted himself. Take, briefly, a few other examples: Luke xxi. 17. "And ye shall be hated of *all men* for my name sake," i. e., as many men as know and hate me will hate you. Mark i. 37. "They said unto Jesus *all men* seek for thee," i. e., many desired to see Jesus. And v. 20. "*All men* did marvel," i. e., *all* who heard Legion tell the story of his deliverance. Acts xix. 19. "They brought their books and burned them before *all men*," i. e., they burned them publicly. In the text under consideration, the Apostle is not speaking of all the human race, but limits the term *all* by the effects

of the death of Christ, in making those, for whom he died, live, not to themselves, but to him who died for them. "He died for all that they," for whom he died, "living, (*οἱ ζῶντες*) should not live unto themselves." The meaning is, all for whom he died live by his death. And this makes the passage consistent with the facts in the case, that Christ laid down his life for his sheep, and will quicken and raise them up for his service. Our translation, "that they which live," seems to imply that only some were to live for whom Christ died. But the original text is clear, "that he died for all, that they living should not live to themselves." On this false assumption, that the word *all* means the whole human race, Dr. Bloomfield rests his groundless assertion, "that this text strongly inculcates the doctrine of universal redemption." He, however, endeavors to sustain this assertion by two passages of scripture. 1 Tim. ii. 6. "Who gave himself a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time." The question then, is, for *all whom* did he give himself a ransom? The context furnishes the answer. For all men, of all ranks, whom God our Preserver will have to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (vs. 1—4.) The other text is Heb. ii. 9. "That he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." The passage, as Paul wrote it, is abrupt and elliptical. "Should taste death for every," (*ὕπερ παντός*) the word man is not in the text, but put in by the translators. If the word man had been found prominently in the context, then the sup-
 pliment would have been proper, while it might have remained doubtful whether "every man" meant all the human race. But the Apostle was telling about God's method of bringing many sons unto glory. If we suppose the word *son* in the place of *man*, then the text is beautiful and consistent. "He, by the grace of God,

should taste death for every *son*" whom he was bringing to glory. "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." These texts, properly explained, give no support to the doctrine of universal redemption.

3. On the assertion of universal redemption—that the death of Christ is efficacious for the salvation of all men—Dr. Bloomfield builds his denunciation, borrowed from Dr. A. Clark. "This," universal redemption, "no apostolic man ever did doubt, or could doubt." So we are denounced as not being apostolic. We revile not again, but rejoice in the reproach for Christ's sake—for "Jesus, that he might sanctify the people, with his own blood suffered without the gate. Let us go forth, therefore, unto him, without the camp, bearing his reproach."

I shall examine one more text, which is supposed by some to stand opposed to the views of atonement advanced in this discourse. 2 Pet. iii. 9. "The Lord is long suffering to us-ward"—or toward us—"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This passage is very elliptical, and its meaning can only be perceived by the apostolic use of the pronoun *us*. The pronouns *we* and *us* are frequently used to include all in every age who are made the subjects of saving grace. The long-suffering of God is toward his people. Thus it is said, v. 15: "Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." Days of calamity are shortened, and the world stands for the elect's sake. If we properly supply the elipses, the text is plain and easy to be understood according to the analogy of Faith. Thus: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise of *coming to judgment for the destruction of ungodly men*, and for the salvation of his people,

as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any *of us* should perish, but *willing* that all *of us* should come to repentance." This text harmonizes with the words of our Lord: "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 39, 40.

2. I will now attempt to answer one more objection. It is alleged by some, that we cannot preach the gospel to every creature—*i. e.*, to all who hear us—that we must have a great difficulty in offering condemned sinners a free and full pardon—and that when we speak of the election of grace and the atonement made by Jesus Christ, as being of the same extent with God's purpose to save sinners—we cannot then consistently say, in the name of Christ, "look unto me all ye ends of the earth and be ye saved." In reply to all this, I can say, with truth, that we have no such difficulties as are here supposed, and for several reasons:

1. Because secret things belong to God, and things that are revealed to us and to our children. If the Lord knoweth them that are His, and could say to Paul, at Corinth, hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city, and Paul, not knowing who they were, could stay there a year and six months teaching the Word of God among them—we can follow his example. When Christ says "Other sheep I have—they also I must bring," and then commands the under-shepherds to go into all the world to look after them, and bring them to the fold—they can go and teach the Word of God among all nations, for the elects' sake.

2. He who is commanded to preach the Gospel, is

also charged, rightly to divide the word of truth. One right division of the word of truth is into threatenings, invitations and promises. Can we not deal out the threatenings to the impenitent who are under the law? Can we not hold out the invitations to the convicted and inquiring sinner? and can we not apply the promises to the penitent believer?

3. When we stand up to preach to ten or to ten thousand, we do not know but they are all of the election of Grace; and we can say to them all, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

4. We never feel any difficulty in the delivery of our message, just as the Apostles and Prophets preached the Gospel. We can say to all who hear us, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him." And "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." We can invite the weary, the heavy laden, the starving, thirsty, and whosoever will, to come. We can say, "Whosoever believeth on the Son, hath life, and shall not come into condemnation." We preach *Free Salvation*. Though sinners who are saved are bought with a price, even the priceless price of the precious blood of the only begotten Son of God; yet to the sinner eternal life is a gift from God. Free salvation, without money, without price. No, not even the price of one good work. It is to him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that Justifieth the ungodly. Nor can he present his faith as a price,

that is also the gift of God. So free is the salvation which we preach, that whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely. We also preach a full salvation. Yes, so full that Christ saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. So full, that when thousands have come to Christ, and not one that did come has been cast out—thousands more may come—for there is yet room. So full, that it embraces all ranks of men, from the king to the beggar—it embraces all nations—the Jew, the Greek, the barbarian, the Scythian, the bond, the free. So full, that the Company finally presented faultless before the Throne of Glory, shall be innumerable; and so complete that Christ shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. How, then, can we have any difficulty in teaching all nations whatsoever the Saviour has commanded? This is not only an easy task, but a delightful labor of love.

But what is the task undertaken by the Universalist? It is to prove, in opposition to a multitude of inspired witnesses, that there shall be no punishment after death. Or if there be punishment in a future state, it shall be of limited duration. We look upon this to be a hard task—to teach all nations that Jesus Christ was either under a mistake, or intended to deceive, when he said so much about the undying worm, unquenchable fire, and of the wicked departing into everlasting fire—going away into everlasting punishment.

But the Arminian has still a harder task than the Universalist. He has to prove that Jesus Christ made Atonement for the sins of every child of Adam, and then to prove that this Atonement secured the salvation of no human being—that it only put men in a state of new probation, for every one to be saved if he will—that a man may will one way to-day and be a child of God; and he may will another way to-morrow

and be a child of the devil; and thus while it is uncertain about the salvation of a single soul, it is most certain that millions shall perish for whom Christ died. The just died for the unjust, to bring them to God, but he is dead in vain! To preach such a system as this, we should consider the hardest of all tasks.

Compared with this, we feel our task easy and delightful to preach, as our Lord and Master did; "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me: And this is the Father's will which hath sent me; that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (Jno. vi. 37—40.) So do, Lord Jesus, according to the will of Him that sent thee, and according to thine own word. AMEN.

